

Preliminary Amendment Dated: January 20, 2005

Applicant: Deliang Zhang et al

Attorney Docket No.: 3392-00013

In the Specification:

Please add the following heading and paragraph at page 1, between the title and the first line of text as follows:

---CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is the U.S. national stage application of International Application PCT/NZ2003/000159, filed July 22, 2003, which international application was published on January 29, 2004, as International Publication WO 2004/009857 in the English language. The International Application claims priority of New Zealand Patent Application No. 520369, filed July 22, 2002.---

Please rewrite paragraph 5 at page 14, line 29 with the following paragraph:

Once the volume fraction of the Al₂O₃ in the Ti_xAl_y(O) rich powder has been reduced to below 30% the powder can then be mixed with calcium hydride and heated to 800°C1100°C to facilitate the reaction between Al₂O₃ and calcium hydride to eliminate Al₂O₃, and between Ti_xAl_y(O) and calcium hydride to reduce the oxygen content in the Ti_xAl_y(O) phase to below 1.5 atomic percent. As a by product of the reaction, the CaO and 3CaO.Al₂O₃ phase can then be leached out by using mild acids such as formic and acetic acids.

Please add the enclosed "Abstract of the Disclosure" as new page 20 to the specification.